The Myrtle

"INSTEAD OF THE BRIER SHALL COME UP THE MYRTLE TREE." ISA. LV. 13.

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A Picture.

A REVERENT hush fell on the waiting crowd,
And silently a voice uprose in prayer.
A sunbeam through the half-closed lattice stole,
And lighted up the lofty frescoed cross,
And fell upon the speaker's silvered head
As if it were a benison from Heaven.

About the altar and the white-haired saint,
Were others haloed with the crown of time,
Who long had battled in the blessed strife
And only waited for the victor's palm;
And some in manhood's strong and fervid noon,
And others in the grace and flush of youth.
In bowed and humble attitude they sat,
The chosen shepherds of the Master's fold.

And on the breast of one there leaned a child,
A little child with curling golden hair,
With bright blue eyes and tender, dimpled hands
That lightly rested on the father's arm.
No need for her to bow the sorrowing head,
Or drop the bitter penitential tear.
Sweet innocence its unstained image kept
In the soft eyes that wondering upward turned.
Not yet the voice within her spirit cried
From out the world's wild, stormy wilderness:
She had not wandered in its mazy depths;—
Her feet yet lingered by the sunny paths,
In which so lately she had strayed from Heaven.

And while the father's face was lowly bent,
And rested hidden in his lifted hand,
The gentle child in conscious safety lay,
Securely folded in her father's arms,
And listening to the music of his heart.

Sweet picture! type of saintly confidence!
That brings afresh the tale of olden time
When the disciples of the Master's choice
Went anxiously inquiring of their Lord
The secret way that to the kingdom led,—
"And in their midst he set a little child."

H. A. B.

* The scene which inspired these lines occurred at the Massachusetts State Convention several years ago. It is again recalled by the lesson-story on the last page.

For the Myrtle.

Some Fairy Stories.

FOR THE YOUNGEST READERS.

III.

NOW, my children, I have two more fairies I wish to tell you about to-day.

If you go to your Missionary Box,—for of course you have one in your home, standing on the mantel, or on some table where it can be seen by all—and listen, you will hear the voices of two fairies. The name of one is Self-denial, the other is Selfishness. The yboth keep guard over that Box—one trying to fill it, the other trying to keep it empty,

Perhaps there is a bright new penny in your pocket, and you have been thinking that sometime you will spend it for candy or goodies. Now the fairy Self-denial, with its soft, pleasant voice, will whisper, "Just drop your penny into the Box, and help a good work, and your heart will feel light and happy." But the other fairy, Selfishness, will say at once, "Don't do it, enjoy your candy and never mind the Box. Leave that for your father and mother. One penny cannot help it much, and little children ought not to deny themselves, to do grown-up people's work."

Then Self-denial will say, "give the Box just one penny a week, that will be fifty-two in a year, you can even then spend one occasionally for 'goodies.'" For you must know the good fairies like to see children sometimes spending their money for such things. They don't believe that they should be deprived of them altogether. But

they *do* believe that boys and girls should think of *something* besides toys, candies and goodies.

And just think if every boy and girl in our Universalist homes would only heed the voice of Self-denial, and drop a single penny a week into that little Box, how many pennies there would be, and how much good they would do!

I have talked with some of the boys and girls in our Sabbath Schools about these Boxes, telling them for what the money is spent, and how much they could do in helping to educate young ministers. But children, you don't know how much it grieves me to tell you, that in nearly every case I have found that they had rather listen to the voice of Selfishness instead of his fairy sister, Self-denial. But let me ask all you who ever look through the pages of our MYRTLE, from the bright little ones of the Infant Classes, up to the Bible Classes even, to think about these Boxes as you never have before, and to begin at once, and listen to the voice of Self-denial as she pleads with you to put your pennies in them. Drive the fairy selfishness, away from *your* Boxes. I know he will struggle hard to remain. I know he will try to persuade you that he is a better friend to you than Self-denial. But don't believe him. Just let Self-denial be your counsellor for one year, and then at its close I know you will say "I am a better and happier boy or girl, than I should have been had I let Selfishness rule in my heart."

And then, if you listen to the voice of Self-denial yourself, perhaps you can help some who are older to do the same. Does your older brother waste his money in smoking? Ask him to deny himself one penny a week and give it to the Missionary Box. Tell your sister that if she saves one fare in the horse cars by walking instead of riding she can have pennies for six weeks for the Missionary Box. There are a good many ways which this fairy Self-denial suggests to others besides boys and girls for helping these little Boxes which have such an important work to do in our church. But this talk is only for the children. So I will not say how hard these two fairies work with older people, or how much oftener many whom they try to influence obey the voice of Selfishness rather than that of Self-denial. But if you follow Self-denial when you are children, you will be sure to do so when you get to be men and women. *M. F. B.*

THE Lord loveth a cheerful giver.

Carrie's Hospital.

Carrie was very busy in one corner of the nursery. She had taken all her large square blocks and arranged them in rows of three, a little way apart, and spread a white cloth over each row, so that they looked like small, narrow cots.

On each of these cots lay a doll, six dolls in all, of various sizes, some of them belonging to Carrie and some to Essie, her little sister. She was walking up and down between the rows, going from one bed to another, and talking away to herself at a great rate in a low voice, when Aunt Jennie came in.

"What is this?" said she, coming up to Carrie's corner.

"S-h!" said Carrie, "you mustn't speak so loud here; its the hospital."

Carrie's father had been a chaplain in the army, before she was born, and he had often told her about the hospitals.

"Oho;" said Aunt Jennie, "and you are the doctor, I suppose?"

"Oh, I'm the nurse, and you mustn't, please, say doctor, Aunt Jennie; there's some other name papa calls it — oh, surgeon! You must say surgeon, for all these sick people have had dreadful things happen to them. Won't you be the surgeon?"

"Yes," said Aunt Jennie, "but you must wait until I get my case of instruments."

So Aunt Jennie went out of the room, and pretty soon came back with a small morocco box in her hand, and stepped up to the front cot.

"Ah?" said she, "a compound fracture of the leg. Severe but not dangerous; very severe. The leg, I see, is entirely gone below the knee; it must have been shot off, or cut off."

"Oh, no!" said the nurse. "She went to the menagerie, and the tiger bit it off."

"Terrible! And did he eat it up, too?"

"No; they got it away from him at last, and here it is." Carrie fished it up from the bottom of a small trunk.

"All right," said the surgeon, and opening her case of instruments, she went to work, and by a most skilful operation the leg was soon in its place as good as ever.

"There," said she, "I call that a pretty nice job. Not many sawbones could beat that. Keep her still for a day or two, and she will be able to use that leg just as well as the other. Now the next. Oh, is is a very bad case indeed! Skull

fractured; brain exposed and protruding from the wound."

"She lived in the top story of a house," explained the nurse, "and when it got on fire, she was running down stairs, and fell over the balusters."

"She must be trepanned at once, or she will die," said the surgeon.

"What is trepanned?" asked Carrie.

"You surprise me, ma'am," said the surgeon. "A hospital nurse, and not know what the operation of trepanning is! Look at me, and you will see." And putting in her finger she lifted up at least half an inch of crushed-in skull.

"There! Hasn't she been delirious, talking about all kinds of things?"

"To be sure!" answered the nurse, "she has talked all night about the fire."

"Of course," said the surgeon, "that was the pressure of the brain, which is now relieved. And now her eyes, which are very much affected, must be attended to. You see we remove this soft, white substance — the brain — and introduce this wonderful new instrument. There!"

And with a pair of tweezers, Aunt Jennie, as she spoke, skilfully put the eyes in place, stuffed in the "brains," put a large piece of court plaster over all, and advised perfect quiet until the plaster should be quite dry.

"This boy," said the nurse, uncovering another patient, "was turning somersets in a circus, when he broke the vein in his leg, and the blood gushed out all over the floor!"

"Yes; I see he has lost a great deal of blood, and looks very thin; but I will fill him up again and sew up the vein, and then all he will need will be plenty of beef-tea, and no more somersets."

"You are a splendid surgeon, Aunt Jennie!" exclaimed Carrie, in ecstacies; "and Essie will be so glad; that is her boy. Do you think you can cure this one? She is my favorite child, Emeline, and yesterday I left her playing on the floor for just a moment, and a great giant came along and stepped on her head."

But the surgeon shook her head very gravely over the patient.

"The jugular vein is severed and the neck is broken," said she; "and such cases seldom recover. However, I will take her to my house and see what can be done; to-morrrow you may call, and I will give you my opinion of her."

"And here is the last one, Robinson Crusoe. There's nothing much the matter with him, except that he had fever, and his hair fell off."

And nurse lifted up the unfortunate Robinson.

"Did you keep the hair?"

"Oh yes, the skin came off, too; see!"

"Ah, well! We have a hair restorer which makes it grow on again in a few moments, Bring me that bottle with a brush in it, which stands on the shelf, nurse."

Then Aunt Jennie put lots of hair restorer on Robinson Crusoe's bald scalp, clapped on his lost wig, and then he was as good as new.

The next day when Carrie went into Aunt Jennie's room to inquire about Emeline, there sat the young lady on the window-seat, the same Emeline, yet not the same, with redder cheeks, bluer eyes, unruffled curls, and not a trace of the giant's heavy foot to be seen. Carrie looked amazed for a moment, then the truth flashed upon her, and she ran to her aunt and hugged her so tight as to almost take away her breath.

"O you dear Aunt Jennie!" she cried; "you've bought me a new one! You've bought me a new one!" And she darted to astonish Essie with the account of Emeline's wonderful recovery. — *Youth's Companion.*

A Hero.

"If I were a general," said Freddie, laying down his history, "I should be happy."

"Are you not happy now?" asked Aunt Margaret.

"Oh, yes! But I long to be a hero. *It is* something to be a hero; don't you think so?"

"Yes," said Aunt Margaret, "I admire a hero. Shall I tell you how you may become one now, a boy-hero? which, I think, is far more noble than becoming a general."

"Yes," said Freddie eagerly, "do tell me."

"By being master of yourself. Do not give way to angry, wicked feelings. The Bible says, 'He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit, than he that taketh a city.' Think of this, and when tempted to do wrong, fight for the right, and you will be a hero greater than a general."

How many hours of sadness and sorrow have been caused by the utterance of careless, thoughtless words!

For the Myrtle.

The Jewish Child.

Oh to have been that little child
  That Christ among his chosen set,
To teach them to be good and mild, —
  Has any child such longing met?

So winsome, sweet and undefiled,
  So pure 'mid lives with sin so black, —
Oh to have been that holy child
  Would any turn the centuries back?

Nay, yield him not such favored claim:
  In ages past or years to come
Christ knows his little ones the same,
  And finds in each pure heart his home.

And "in the midst" he sets them still,
  The little children pure and fair;
All may his chosen be who will, —
  Of such his kingdom everywhere!

H. A. B.

The Two Sisters.

"B. D.?"

"Yes. Me?"

"Yes."

This funny dialogue passed between Angie and Lena Converse, two sisters five and seven years of age.

It needs some explanation, but let us go back a little first.

Angie and Lena were very affectionate, warm hearted girls, with hearts brimful of love for each other, and yet there would occasionally be some little misunderstanding in their plays which caused them some sad moments.

They hardly knew how it would occur, with all their wealth of sister-love, that everything should not always glide smoothly along between them.

They had hardly got old enough to understand old Mr. Selfishness, who seeks so earnestly for an intimate acquaintance with every little boy and girl, in fact with every man and woman as well.

He is almost sure to find some place in everybody's heart where he can take up his abode.

He made Lena think that as she was the older, she ought to be the one to decide about the plays, and have the largest doll, the most fruit, the highest swing and the longest ride.

And he told Angie that the older ought certainly to give up to the younger and let her have her choice of plays, the best or all of the fruit, and her preference in all the plays generally.

So through all their gay pastimes there ran a little web of selfishness woven by this cunning old enemy of all peace and pleasure.

In every garden where grow the flowers of love and kindness, he is sure to sow the seeds of distrust and jealousy. So he told Lena that if Angie loved her just as much as she should love her dear sister who was "getting almost old enough to take care of her," she would be sure and save the best of everything for her, and at the same time he whispered in Angie's ear, saying, "you give up to Lena sometimes, and now if she loves you the least bit, she will give up to you."

In that way he put a little naughty seed down just beside every good one, hoping to make it grow so fast that it would kill out every plant of truth and goodness, and thus he would have their warm and fertile hearts all to his own wicked self.

But these sisters, with their mamma's assistance, began to find out his artful tricks after a time and often disappointed him in his plans.

They found that one nice way to counteract his influence, even after he had sown his seed and made them unkind and selfish, was to go away and ask God to pardon the wrong and at the same time seek each other's forgiveness with a full expression of sorrow.

In this way their love grew stronger and stronger, and whenever the slightest thing occurred to mar this interest, they loved to hasten to make it all right again.

And when they went to sleep at night, they wanted to be sure that there was not the least thing to come between their loving hearts, and

so anxious did they bcome for this, that they made it a rule every night to ask each other to forgive anything that in any way, even unintentionally, they had done to hurt each other's feelings.

At length, without any long explanation they would say every night, "Will you forgive all my dad deeds to-day?"

But even this seemed too long, and they abbreviated it to "bad deeds."

And finally they used only the first letters of these words.

So every night there is a beautiful scene enacted in their little chamber.

The two sisters dress for the night, and kneeling sometimes alone together and sometimes with their dear mamma, they say their evening prayers, asking God to forgive every naughty act, word or thought of the day. Then they lie down clasped in each other's arms; saying the last thing before their good-night kiss,

"B. D?"

"Yes. Me?"

"Yes. Good-night."

"Good-night."

So the peace angel hovers over them, and they close their eyes and dream of love and kindness — *Myrtle.*

Dolly Dimple.

LITTLE Dolly Dimple sat down in a chair,
With a nice sweet orange and a juicy pear;
In mamma's best rocker little Dolly sat,
Watching sharp her treasurss, — playing sick at that.

Selfish little Dolly would not give away
Just a taste of orange to her sister May.
"Oranges are made for girls who have a cold,"
Said this selfish Dolly, only six years old.

Little Dolly Dimple said to Baby Will,
"You must not eat orange, it will make you ill;
Pears are very knurly, — look at this and see, —
Very bad for babies, but will do for me.

Don't you know the story of a boy named Ned,
Who ate half an orange when he went to bed,
And he had the toothache all the live-long night?
So will you have, Willie, if you take a bite."

Selfish little Dolly keeps her orange still,
Will not give a morsel to little May or Will;
And her pear she watches carefully each day, —
Presently she'll find it spoiling by decay.

She may keep her orange and her juicy pear;
When she finds them spoiling nobody will care.
Nobody will love her; it is surely true
All should share with others, — that's the way to do.

The Dayspring.

How the Cable Talks.

We read at the morning breakfast table the Queen of England's speech at the opening of Parliament the day before; the dangerous illness of the Emperor William and the latest news from France and Italy. But few understand the wonderful working of the instrument that reports the news across the ocean. An exchange gives a clear account of the manner in which it works:

An operator sits at a table in a room darkened by a curtain. On his left hand stands a little instrument named the "reflecting galvanometer," the invention of Sir William Thompson, without which Atlantic telegraphy would be a slow process, not exceeding two or three words per minute, instead of eighteen or twenty, the present rate.

This delicate instrument consists of a tiny magnet, and a small mirror hanging on a silk thread, the two together weighing but a few grains. The electric current passing along the wire from Valencia, deflects the magnet to and fro. The mirror reflects a spot of light on a scale in a box placed at the operator's right hand, where, by its oscillation, the spot of light indicates the slight movements of the magnet, which are too slight to be directly seen.

The little swinging magnet follows every change in the received current; and every change, great or small, produces a corresponding oscillation of the spot of light on the scale. A code of signals is so arranged, by which the movement of the spot of light is made to indicate the letters of the alphabet.

When receiving a message from Valencia, the operator watches the movement of the little speck, which keeps dancing about over the scale on his right. To his practiced eye, each movement of the spot of light represents a letter of the alphabet, and its seemingly fantastic motions are spelling out the intelligence which the pulsings of the electric current are transmitting between the two hemispheres. It is truly marvellous to note how rapidly the experienced operator disentangles the irregular oscillations of the little speck of light into the letters and words which they represent.

LOVE one human being purely aad warmly, and you will love all. The heart in this heaven, like the wandering sun, sees nothing, from the dewdrop to the ocean, but a mirror which it warms and fills.

The Mourner.

[CHARACTERS.—*One to represent the Mourner, and five others to represent Patience, Resignation, Faith, Hope, and Charity.*

The Mourner (*soliloquizing*). O, my poor sorrowing heart! What is earth? A fleeting show, soon past; a bubble, soon lost; a breath, soon spent! Why am I spared? Why may I not make my bed in the grave, and be free from earth's trials? I care not to live longer, now I am alone! There is no one to soothe my troubles, or to weep with me in my grief! Alone! alone!

Enter Patience. "Behold, we count them happy which endure! Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy." — *James* v. 2.

Enter Resignation, and stands by the side of Patience. "Wherefore, let them that suffer according to the will of God, commit the keeping of their souls to him in well-doing, as unto a faithful Creator." — 1 *Peter* iv. 19.

Enter Faith. "For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world; and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." — 1 *John* v. 4.

Entrr Hope. "But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope." — 1 *Thess.* iv. 13.

Enter Charity. "Charity suffereth long, and is kind." "Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. Charity never faileth." — 1 *Cor.* xiii. 4, 7, 8.

Mourner. Who are these that thus unbidden enter the house of mourning? that thus attempt to draw the afflicted heart from the contemplation of those lost dear ones? Why do ye thus intrude, or with vain words seek to fill the heart already broken? Leave me alone; for I would fain be deaf to earth, and rest in solitude till life is past!

(*The five then sing the following:*)

Mourner, do not suffer longer!
Lift thou up thy drooping head!
Though the friends who fondly loved thee
Slumber now among the dead.

Though their pale and lifeless bodies
In the grave were buried low;
Yet the friends who tarried with thee
At the feet of Jesus bow.

Here they suffered pain and anguish!
There they lay them all aside!
Here they battled with the waters,
Fiercely tossing o'er the tide;

Now, their bark has safely landed
On the blessed heavenly shore,
And they meet the long-lost loved ones,
Meet them there, to part no more.

Mourner, wouldst thou now recall them,
Wouldst thou call them back to earth?
Bid them tread again these portals,
And engage in scenes of mirth?

Or, while they their songs are singing,
"*Glory, glory to our King!*"
Wouldst thou sadly sit repining;
And with them refuse to sing?

(*All answer.*)

Mourner. Whence are these sweet sounds? It is not like earthly music! Who are ye, and by what names are ye known?

Patience. Patience.
Resignation. Resignation.
Faith. Faith.
Hope. Hope.
Charity. Charity.

Patience.
Patience, duty to fulfil.

Resignation.
Resignation to His will.

Faith.
Faith in God, in whom we trust,
Giveth life to all the just.

Hope.
Hope, an anchor to the soul.

Charity.
Charity to each and all.

All.
These to suffering man are given,
To guide him in the way to heaven.

Mourner. On what errand are ye come? What is your mission?

Patience. To sustain.
Resignation. To comfort.
Faith. To guide.
Hope. To cheer.
Charity. To relieve.

Patience.
Sustaining grace you sure will find
If you in patience wait;
His ear to every call inclined,
To hear both small and great.

Resignation.
To comfort when all things of earth
Fade from your sight away;
With resignation to His will,
He makes the night as day.

Faith.
Faith dwells within the Christian's heart,
His guide and inner light;
Pillar of cloud in sorrow's day,
Pillar of fire by night.

Hope.
Hope is the Christian's anchor sure;
In grief a blessing given;
His landmark on the shores of time,
His passport into heaven.

Charity.
Having charity for erring ones;
The suffering relieve;
Your life may thus be spent for Him
In whom you now believe.

Mourner. Enough! these words have cheered me; and whenever I am forgetting my mission in life, may I be reminded of these kind admonitions. Now, ere you depart, sing me one sweet strain, that I may not soon forget.

(*They sing.*)

O, who, in such a world as this,
Could bear his lot of pain,
Did not one radiant hope of bliss
Unclouded yet remain?

That hope the sovereign Lord has given,
Who reigns above the skies;
Hope that unites the soul to heaven,
By faith's endearing ties.

Each care, each ill of mortal birth,
Is sent in pitying love,
To lift the lingering heart from earth,
And speed its flight above.

And every pang that wrings the breast,
And every joy that dies,
Tells us to seek a purer rest,
And trust to holier ties.

Sunday School Speaker.

The Christian Spirit.

MARK i. 33–41.

From the region of Cæsarea Philippi, where the transfiguration took place, and the healing of the child who had epilepsy, Jesus returned with his disciples to Capernaum.

As they journeyed it seems that the disciples, being a little apart from their Master, had talked among themselves of the kingdom which they supposed he was to establish in the nation; and they began to plan for that bright future when he should reign in great state in Jerusalem and they should share his glory with him.

This belief is easily explained. The Jews had long expected a Messiah, a great leader, who should free the nation from the Roman power, and should make himself king over it. Then they believed that the glory and power that the nation had in the days of its great king David would return to it. They called this expected Messiah "the son of David," and the prophets said, "He shall reign on the throne of his father David." That was why, when Jesus came doing his great works, that the people asked him so anxiously, "Art thou he that should come?" The people who "believed on him" believed on him as this leader. Even the dieciples themselves, knowing him to be the promised Messiah, supposed of course, that he was to become king of the nation. And when he talked about the kingdom of heaven, they understood him to mean this Jewish kingdom. It was very hard for them to give up this brilliant hope. Even the last time that Jesus went to Jerusalem they asked him eagerly, "Lord, wilt thou at *this* time restore the kingdom to Israel?"

This explains the meaning of their quarrel. They had disputed who should be greatest in this kingdom. We read elsewhere that the mother of John and James came to Jesus asking that one of her sons might be first and the other second in his kingdom. Worldly ambition was in the hearts of these first Christians, as it has been in the hearts of many Christians since.

When they were at rest in the house at Capernaum, Jesus inquired what this dispute had been about; not that he did not know, but because he had a lesson to teach them about this kingdom of his. They were ashamed to tell him, it seems: for they "held their peace" *because* "they had disputed which should be the greatest."

How deeply this offended the Master appears from the deliberate, almost solemn way in which the rebuke is stated. He sat down, and *called the twelve*, and said unto them, "If any man desire to be first, the same shall be last of all, and servant of all."

The desire to be first! how often do we see this disposition in children's hearts, and in older hearts too, who never think of it as a sin. Let us remember the words in which our Master spoke of it.

Then he took a child in his arms and set him in the midst of the twelve disciples and as he did so he said, "Whosoever shall receive one of such children in my name receiveth me; and whosoever receiveth me receiveth him that sent me." I think he meant, by this, that whosoever receiveth into his heart the spirit of the little child, that loves others more than itself and never thinks itself great or wise, he has received into his heart the spirit of Christ and of God. Was not that a grand and beautiful lesson, beautifully told?

Then John "answered him" by telling of one who had wrought good deeds in his name but followed him not and how the disciples forbade him to do it. How did this *answer* Jesus? I think it was because John meant to say by it, "Are not we who follow thee *better* than those who do not follow thee?"

This was asked by the dearest disciple of all, who probably knew that Jesus loved him with a peculiar love. We can imagine how he *wanted* Jesus to say that his own disciples were better than others. But what *did* Jesus say?

He said that whoever did his work and showed his spirit *was* his disciple, whether he followed him or not; whoever gave so much as a cup of cold water in his spirit, should not be forbidden but blest in the deed. That is a great lessoa for Christ's own followers to remember. We are his only so far as we do his work, in his spirit; and everybody else who does his work, in his spirit, is his also, no matter by what name they are called, or whether they are called by any Christian name.

It is these true and noble souls everywhere that make the true "church of the living God." If we belong to *this* church, no matter whether the world hears us or forbids us. But when we begin to think ourselves the best, then are we the least in this true kingdom. St. Paul warns the Christian not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think. When we seek the lowest place, "in honor preferring one another," then are we nearest to the spirit of Christ and of God; the spirit illustrated by the simple and pure-hearted little child.

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